

The Missouri River Task Force was established in 2000 when Congress passed Senator Conrad's Missouri River Protection and Improvement Act. The task force will oversee efforts to reduce silt and the build-up of sediment that threaten drinking water supplies, force water over the river's edge and endanger fishing, boating and other water-based activities. The 2000 legislation also authorized \$25 million to fund projects identified by the task force to protect the river.

Currently, the amount of sediment entering the entire Missouri River system is 92,500 acre-feet per year. This build-up has forced the water table to rise in the Buford-Trenton Irrigation District near Williston, flooding farmland. The accumulation of sediment clogged the water intake at Fort Yates in November of 2003, leaving thousands of people without water until the sediment was removed. Sediment has also affected the city of Mandan's intake. Without intervention to remove this silt, the city could lose its water supply.

Members of the Missouri River Task Force, who were nominated by Governor Hoeven, include state leaders in agriculture, conservation, recreation, environment, energy and water development. In addition, the task force will include representatives from federal agencies such as the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, Department of Agriculture, Department of Energy and Department of Interior.

Members of the Missouri River Task Force include:

Chairman, Col. Jeffrey Bedey, U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, Omaha District
ND Department of Health, Mike Sauer
ND Department of Parks and Recreation, Jesse Hanson
ND Department of Game and Fish, Steve Dyke
ND State Water Commission, Todd Sando
ND Indian Affairs Commission, Cheryl Kulas
Agricultural groups, Carlyle Hillstrom
Environmental or conservation org, Mike Donahue
Hydroelectric power industry, Mike Dwyer
Recreation user groups, Dave Patience
Local governments, Andy Mork
Natural Resources Conservation Service, Wes Wiedenmeyer
Other appropriate interests, Robert Harms
Other appropriate interests, Ken Royse
Spirit Lake Sioux Tribe, Vern Lambert
Standing Rock Sioux Tribe, Chairman, Ron His Horse Is Thunder
Three Affiliated Tribes, Chairman Tex Hall
Turtle Mountain Band of Chippewa, Gene R. Laducer
U.S. Fish and Wildlife, Jeffrey Towner
Western Area Power Administration, Robert Harris